



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/972,031	10/04/2001	Eugeni Namsaraev	STAN-202	2881

24353 7590 03/18/2005
BOZICEVIC, FIELD & FRANCIS LLP
1900 UNIVERSITY AVENUE
SUITE 200
EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303

EXAMINER

MARTINELL, JAMES

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1634

DATE MAILED: 03/18/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

46

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/972,031

Applicant(s)

NAMSARAEV ET AL.

Examiner

James Martinell

Art Unit

1634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 and 30-45 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 34-44 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28, 30-33 and 45 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/4/05.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 1634

Claims 34-44 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the response filed April 14, 2003.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-28, 30-33, and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are vague and indefinite.

- (a) The recitation of "a perfectly matched region of complementarity" (claim 1) is vague and indefinite because the metes and bounds of the claim are not clear.
- (b) The recitation of "modified DNA (mDNA)" (claim 8) is vague and indefinite because the instant application does not distinguish modified DNA from unmodified DNA.
- (c) The recitation of "distinct sequence" (claims 15 and 16) is vague and indefinite because the instant application does not distinguish a distinct sequence from an indistinct sequence.
- (d) The recitation of "detectably labeled" (claim 28) is vague and indefinite because the instant application does not distinguish a detectable label from an undetectable label.

Art Unit: 1634

- (e) The recitation of "no more than about 60° C" (claim 30) is vague and indefinite because the metes and bounds of the claim are not clear. For example, it is not clear whether a temperature of 61° C is included in the limitation because 62° C is "about" 60° C and is not more than 62° C, but is clearly more than 60° C.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claim 45 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Nedbal et al (Biochemistry 36: 13552 (1997)). Nedbal et al teaches the use of tetralkylammonium salts (*e.g.*, CTAB and others) to increase the association rate of nucleic acids in nucleic acid molecular hybridization reactions (*e.g.*, see paragraph bridging pages 13552-13553 and paragraph bridging pages 13556-13557).

Art Unit: 1634

The reaction conditions taught in Nedbal et al are embraced by the claim (*e.g.*, 100mM NaCl and 10mM MgCl₂ (paragraph bridging pages 13552-13553)).

Claims 1-28 and 30-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cronin et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,027,880) in view of Nedbal et al (Biochemistry 36: 13552 (1997)). Cronin et al teaches the hybridization of multiple nucleic acids on arrays to detect single nucleotide differences (*e.g.*, see columns 38-42). Cronin et al further teaches the use of association enhancers (*e.g.*, column 47), albeit at higher salt concentrations than required in the instant claims. Nedbal et al teaches the use of tetraalkylammonium salts (*e.g.*, CTAB and others) to increase the association rate of nucleic acids in nucleic acid molecular hybridization reactions (*e.g.*, see paragraph bridging pages 13552-13553 and paragraph bridging pages 13556-13557). The salt concentration taught in Nedbal et al falls within the limits set in the instant claims (*e.g.*, 100mM NaCl and 10mM MgCl₂ (paragraph bridging pages 13552-13553)). It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to run nucleic acid molecular hybridization assays as taught in Cronin et al under the association enhancer conditions taught by Nedbal et al in order to speed up the reassociation rate for the probes and targets in the nucleic acid molecular hybridization reaction as taught by Nedbal et al and thus increase productivity.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James Martinell whose telephone number is (571) 272-0719. The fax phone number for Examiner Martinell's desktop workstation is (571) 273-0719. Only documents such as those intended for use in a personal or telephone interview should be faxed to the examiner's desktop workstation. Any Official Communication to the USPTO should be faxed to (571) 273-8300.

The examiner works a flexible schedule and can be reached by phone and voice mail. Alternatively, a request for a return telephone call may be e-mailed to james.martinell@uspto.gov. Since e-mail communications may not be secure, it is suggested that information in such requests be limited to name, phone number, and the best time to return the call.

Art Unit: 1634

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Jones, can be reached on (571) 272-0745.


OFFICIAL FAX NUMBER

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300. Any Official Communication to the USPTO should be faxed to this number.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.


James Martinell, Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1634
3/16/05